



# Welcome to Whiteknights

A guide for visitors to the University of Reading  
Whiteknights campus

Whiteknights has been in existence since the Norman Conquest when it was known as the Manor of Earley. It was owned by a succession of families, becoming the Whiteknights Estate during the 14th century. In 1606 it passed to the ownership of the Englefield family where it remained for nearly two centuries.

In 1798 the estate was acquired by the Marquis of Blandford who spent vast sums on library acquisitions and elaborate gardens. However by 1817 the Marquis, then the fifth duke of Marlborough, was in debt. As a result in 1819 the estate was dispersed and the original house demolished in 1840.

In 1867 the estate was divided into 6 leaseholds and a smaller house constructed in each. Finally in 1947 the freehold was purchased by the University.

In its present form the Whiteknights campus covers 123 hectares, including Whiteknights lake, conservation meadows and woodlands. It is the largest area maintained by the University.



# The University of Reading

**The University of Reading has been part of the town of Reading for more than a century.**

It began as an extension college of Oxford University in 1892. The *College at Reading* in Valpy Street managed the schools of science and art, which quickly expanded and gained university college status in 1902. Four years later, with over 1,200 students, the college moved into premises still in existence in London Road, presented by the Palmer family. The college was granted its charter and therefore created a university in its own right in 1926. The University of Reading acquired Whiteknights Park in 1947. Since that time, the University has maintained the natural beauty of the campus and preserved the lake, trees and open spaces that give Whiteknights its unique character.



**A small dedicated, professional team** of gardeners and arborists maintain the 123 hectares of Whiteknights as well as all the other areas of University land. The maintenance staff take care of the upkeep of all of the University's halls of residence and other property, while our Groundsmen maintain the sports areas to county standard.

# architecture

**The park has several listed buildings.** The University has recently sympathetically restored Foxhill House, originally built by Alfred Waterhouse in 1867, architect of the Natural History Museum. There are examples of classic 1960s architecture such as the Palmer Building. In contrast, the Henley Business School is an excellent example of a contemporary building.



# people



**The University pledges to preserve and enhance the wild and natural environment** of Whiteknights renowned for its collection of trees, some of which are over 200 years old. Seeds are collected from its veteran trees in order to maintain stock which is valuable for biodiversity. Whiteknights has an important collection of oaks, some donated by Windsor Great Park.

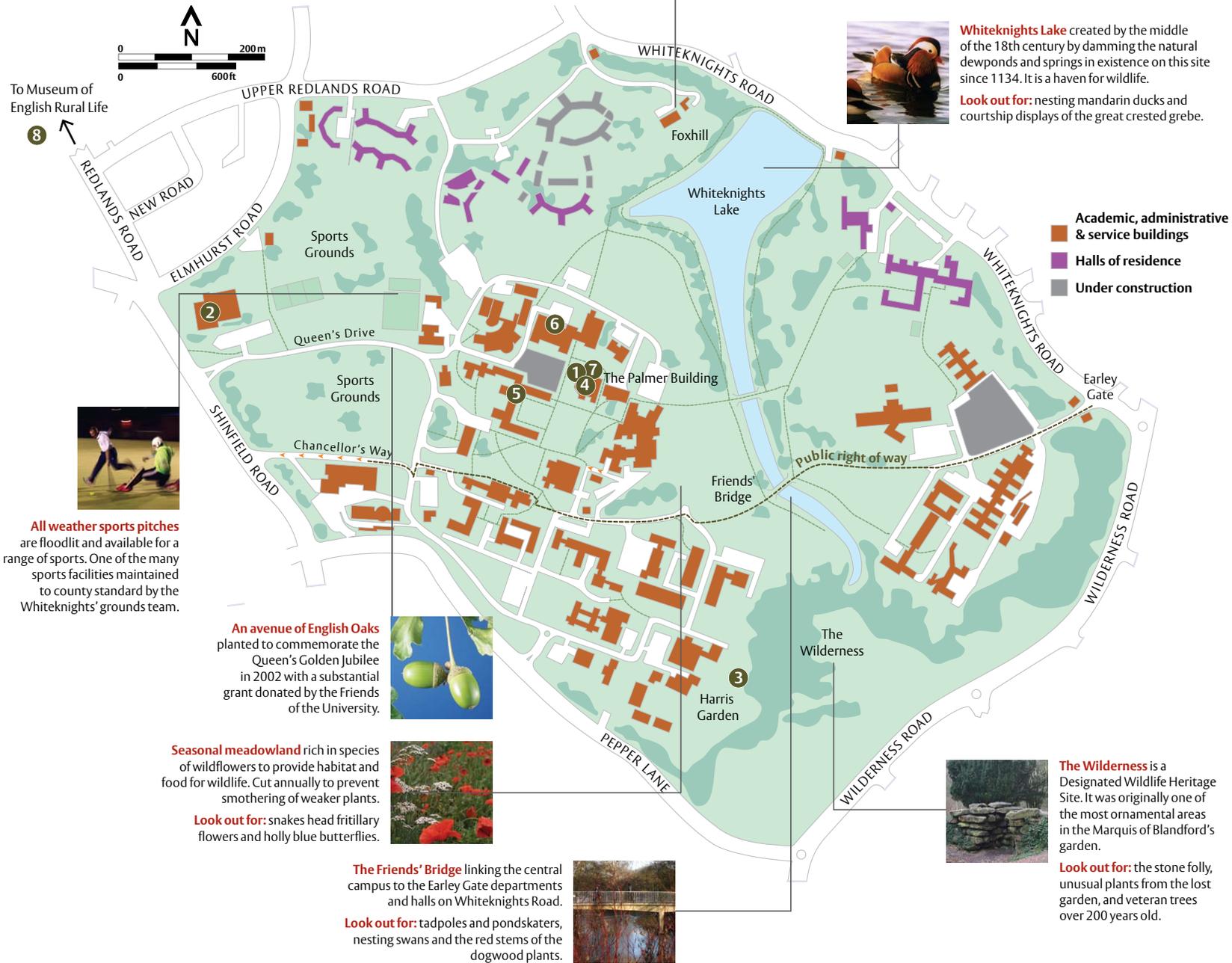
# environment



**Whiteknights supports several designated Wildlife Heritage Sites.** Small areas of meadow are left uncut to provide habitats and food for seed-eating birds and butterflies, while the lake is a haven for fish, birds and insects. At dusk several species of bat can be observed feeding over the water.

# wildlife

# Whiteknights

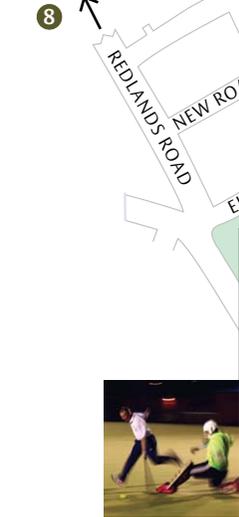


Recently refurbished **Foxhill House** built by Alfred Waterhouse for his own use and one of the 6 smaller houses constructed in 1867 after the division of the original estate in 1840.  
**Look out for:** features of High Gothic architecture.



**Whiteknights Lake** created by the middle of the 18th century by damming the natural dewponds and springs in existence on this site since 1134. It is a haven for wildlife.  
**Look out for:** nesting mandarin ducks and courtship displays of the great crested grebe.

To Museum of English Rural Life



**All weather sports pitches** are floodlit and available for a range of sports. One of the many sports facilities maintained to county standard by the Whiteknights' grounds team.

**An avenue of English Oaks** planted to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 with a substantial grant donated by the Friends of the University.



**Seasonal meadowland** rich in species of wildflowers to provide habitat and food for wildlife. Cut annually to prevent smothering of weaker plants.



**Look out for:** snakes head fritillary flowers and holly blue butterflies.

**The Friends' Bridge** linking the central campus to the Earley Gate departments and halls on Whiteknights Road.

**Look out for:** tadpoles and pondskaters, nesting swans and the red stems of the dogwood plants.



**The Wilderness** is a Designated Wildlife Heritage Site. It was originally one of the most ornamental areas in the Marquis of Blandford's garden.

**Look out for:** the stone folly, unusual plants from the lost garden, and veteran trees over 200 years old.

## Guidance for visitors

Whiteknights is the private property of The University of Reading. It has never been a park, but a public right of way runs from Earley Gate to Shinfield Road. The University reserves the right to prohibit pedestrian access to other areas as necessary. Visitors must adhere to University rules and regulations which are in operation throughout the University's privately owned land at Whiteknights and elsewhere.

### In general

- Please keep to the paths and do not disturb wildlife or pick flowers
- Do not leave any litter or light fires
- Please keep away from buildings and research areas
- Roller-skating, skate-boarding and kite-flying are not allowed
- The lake is not suitable for water sports and activities
- Shooting, archery, golf or other projectile sports are not allowed
- Please listen to any additional advice given by the University staff
- Access may be restricted or permission withdrawn at any time

### In addition, dog-walkers please

- Keep dogs on leads at all times and away from sports pitches
- Take dog fouling away for disposal

- 1 Reading Film Theatre (RFT)
- 2 SportsPark
- 3 The Harris Garden
- 4 Public Lecture Series
- 5 The Ure Museum
- 6 The Cole Museum of Zoology
- 7 Dol.cHe Vita
- 8 The Museum of English Rural Life



# To visit

1 Numbers refer to locations on campus map on previous page

## 1 Reading Film Theatre (RFT)

Established over 30 years ago as an independent cinema with a policy to show the best films from around the world. It is open to everyone. The website provides up to date listings. Programmes are published three times a year and distributed locally.

**Where** The Palmer Building.

**When** Term-time only. Unless stated otherwise, films begin at 8.00pm.

**Contact** (0118) 378 7151 or [rft@reading.ac.uk](mailto:rft@reading.ac.uk)  
[www.readingfilmtheatre.co.uk](http://www.readingfilmtheatre.co.uk)

## 2 SportsPark

Open to University students and staff and also to members of the local community who wish to take part in recreational activities.

**Where** SportsPark, Queens Drive.

**Open** Monday to Friday, 7.30am–10.00pm and 9.00am–9.00pm at weekends.

**Contact** (0118) 378 8799 or [sport@reading.ac.uk](mailto:sport@reading.ac.uk)  
[www.sport.reading.ac.uk](http://www.sport.reading.ac.uk)

## 3 The Harris Garden

**Where** The entrance can be found between the Wilderness and the Plant Sciences Laboratories.

**Open** Several times a year to the general public under various National Garden and other schemes and at other times by prior arrangement. Anyone can become a Friend of the Harris Garden with benefits such as free access and guided walks.

**Contact** Giles Reynolds (0118) 378 8312 or [g.e.reynolds@reading.ac.uk](mailto:g.e.reynolds@reading.ac.uk)

## 4 Public Lecture Series

Everyone is welcome to attend these lectures, showcasing some of the research at the University. They are presented in an informal and enjoyable atmosphere and are all free to attend.

**Where** The Palmer Building.

**When** Various Wednesday evenings from October to March.

**Contact** (0118) 378 4313 or [l.j.walsh@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.j.walsh@reading.ac.uk)  
[www.reading.ac.uk/publiclectureseries](http://www.reading.ac.uk/publiclectureseries)

## 5 The Ure Museum

The fourth most important collection of Greek ceramics in Britain, after those of the British, Ashmolean and Fitzwilliam Museums.

**Where** Ground floor of the Humanities and Social Sciences building.

**Open** Monday to Friday, 9.00am–4.30pm.

**Contact** The Assistant Curator, Jennifer Allison on (0118) 378 6990 or [ure@reading.ac.uk](mailto:ure@reading.ac.uk)  
[www.reading.ac.uk/ure](http://www.reading.ac.uk/ure)

## 6 The Cole Museum of Zoology

Contains about 3500 specimens of which about 400 are on display at any one time.

**Where** Foyer of the AMS building.

**Open** Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) 9.30 am–5.00 pm. Saturdays only during University Open weeks.

**Contact** (0118) 378 4428 or [colemuseum@rdg.ac.uk](mailto:colemuseum@rdg.ac.uk)  
[www.colemuseum.rdg.ac.uk](http://www.colemuseum.rdg.ac.uk)

## 7 Dol.cHe Vita

Expresso bar, open to the public for refreshments.

**Where** The Palmer Building.

**Open** Monday to Friday 8.30am–9.00pm, term time Saturday 11.00am–3.00pm.

## 8 The Museum of English Rural Life

Houses designated collections of national importance with outstanding collections of objects, archives, books and photographs, reflecting all aspects of farming and the countryside.

**Where** Redlands Road (opposite the Hospital).

**Open** Tuesday to Friday 9.00am–5.00pm. Closed between Christmas and New Year and Good Friday. The Reading Room, library, archive and other collections are open Tuesday to Friday 9.00am–5.00pm, appointment preferred.

**Contact** (0118) 378 8660 or [merl@reading.ac.uk](mailto:merl@reading.ac.uk)  
[www.reading.ac.uk/merl](http://www.reading.ac.uk/merl)

### For more information

For details on how to become a Friend of the University, please contact the Secretary  
**(0118) 378 8006**

For information on the management of Whiteknights, please contact the Head of Maintenance and Grounds  
**(0118) 378 4684**

For details of any aspect of the University's activities, please contact the Communications Manager  
**(0118) 378 8004**

For matters relating to security, please contact the Security Control Room  
**(0118) 378 7799**

[www.reading.ac.uk](http://www.reading.ac.uk)